Office of the Governor-Elect

Report of the Policy Transition Committee

on Commonwealth Preparedness

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Office of the Governor-Elect

Richmond, Virginia

January 5, 2006

<u>Commonwealth Preparedness Committee Report</u>

I. <u>Organization</u>. Based, in part, on the Secure Commonwealth Initiatives Strategic Plan, various subcommittees were organized which are identified in the attachment, which also sets forth their respective reports. In preparing this Commonwealth Preparedness Report, it was decided to allow the subcommittee reports to stand on their own but to identify certain common themes.

II. <u>Common Themes</u>.

- Assumption – "All hazards" (i.e., man made and natural disasters) <u>will</u> occur.

    - Regional planning, e.g., using the existing State Police regions should be the focus, recognizing that certain geographical regions will have different emphasis between e.g., natural and terrorist events.

    - Funding issues. The subcommittee reports are consistent in noting that since 9/11 most funding for state emergency organizations has been through federal grants, and that enhanced state funding is required for the various emergency organizations to be effective.

- Current structure for management of hazards must be revised to be more effective.

    - In order to enhance collaboration and coordination between agencies and others with emergency responsibilities, consideration should be given to focusing on the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness, which might be given overall responsibility for "Preparedness Organization" described in the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and for the current primary state level organizations for emergency preparedness activities, including the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP), the Secure Commonwealth Panel (SCP), the Emergency Coordination Officers Group (ECOG), and the Virginia Emergency Response Teams (VERT). Consideration should also be given to the revision of COVEOP to integrate it more closely with the National Response Plan and to the organization of local Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs) to cover the entire Commonwealth.

        - Current system of "SILOS" (or "stovepipes") by which vertical responsibilities inhibit horizontal coordination must be replaced, e.g., through reorganization and/or memorandums of understanding between existing organizations.

        - Communications must be improved between organizations, including those in the private sector. (i) A plan to enhance public knowledge on what can and cannot be done during emergencies should be prepared and implemented starting with education through utilization of school systems, business organizations such as chambers of

commerce and between federal and state organizations. (ii) A statewide citizens' alert system (including regional and local radios) and a website for emergency planning should be implemented. (iii) Public-private partnerships should be examined which should provide for a central point for private sector contact in infrastructure emergency planning and implementation.

- There is redundancy in current training for, e.g., first responders. Upon reorganization, the responsibility for planning of all training might be concentrated in one department with implementation left to constituent organizations. Training of volunteers and the public generally should be included. Training exercises should be prepared with scenarios that are differently ranked by the type of hazard, e.g., bioterrorism and statewide natural calamities within the first rank and regional emergencies such as fires and floods having a lower ranking. Emphasis should be given on planning exercises for the Capitol Region and Hampton Roads, with particular focus on evacuation issues involving these areas.

Other Issues

A. Standards must be developed, e.g., definitions of various levels of threats should be identified that would precipitate different levels of Executive branch authority, including when marshal law may be necessary to be evoked.

B. Borrowing from the experience of other states and the federal government, and building on lessons learned from recent catastrophes, e.g., 9/11 and Katrina, "best practices" (common understandings/definitions for preparedness) should be developed.

C. Virginia Code and regulation amendments may be necessary to include, e.g., legal authority dealing with disaster incidents, clarification of orders of succession (lines of authority) within emergency organizations and possible changes upon any reorganizations. Review and possible implementation of suggestions made by the September 2005 Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) report should be considered.

D. Health hazards may have certain discrete issues, e.g., identification of issues involving first responders, the impact of health hazards on the special needs community, and quarantine issues relating to pandemics.

III. Conclusion.

- A "lack of common vision across organizations" has been recognized under the existing structure. It has been suggested that the incoming Governor will need to concentrate on a system which will give him a vision of Commonwealth preparedness from a "20,000 foot level," i.e., the big picture when disaster strikes,

recognizing that first responders will start their roles at the "one foot level" through incident reporting and action..

- Consideration should be given to proceeding ASAP on two simultaneous tracks: (i) review the work of the Secure Commonwealth Panel to determine which of its recommendations can be promptly adopted and (ii) formation of a Blue Ribbon panel to analyze the existing Virginia system and give recommendations for improvement. Some of the panel members might be drawn from members of the Commonwealth Preparedness Committee, augmented by others, e.g., stakeholders and consultants who may have already been involved in emergency planning.

- Hazards will occur and the State owes an obligation to its citizens to address the issues presented in this report without delay.

Short Synopses for Each Issue Area

Issue Area #1 - Health and Medical Emergency Preparedness and Support Services

- Assure public health and healthcare surge capacity
  Recommendations
  1. Support increased hospital surge capacity and community surge efforts
  2. Support, and if possible expand, the trauma system in Virginia.

- Assure ability to provide mass prophylaxis with medications or vaccines
  Recommendations:
  1. Continue ability to manage the SNS
  2. Incorporate mass dispensing efforts into specific and all hazards plans.

- Provide mental health support for responders, providers and the public
  Recommendations:
  1. Support mental health planning and response at least 18-24 months beyond event.

- Mortality management
  Recommendations:
  1. Develop State Mortuary Response Team, Virginia DMORT and Portable Mortuary Unit.
  2. Private/public partnerships for timely body recovery/preservation during an emergency.
  3. Develop MOUs with federal agencies forVirginia jurisdiction over events in Virginia.
  4. Develop single interoperable computer system for missing persons/unidentified body parts.
  5. Develop policies for testing/management of fragmented, unclaimed, hazardous remains.
  6. Develop a Family Assistance Center to assure services and support for families of the dead.

- Assure the ability to respond to all infectious disease outbreaks and other hazards
  Recommendations:
  1. Assure surveillance/investigation of infectious diseases, chemical and radiologic hazards.
  2. Establish and maintain surveillance systems statewide.
  3. Maintain laboratory capability to identify and monitor both biologic and chemical hazards.

4. Assure the public has information appropriate to response for a broad range of threats.

- Increase public/private collaboration in health planning and response activities
  Recommendations:
  1. Enhance collaboration between VDH and all hospitals and healthcare professionals.
  2. Address response of private providers to emergencies both within/outside Virginia.

- Enhance recruitment and training of volunteers
  Recommendations:
  1. Support localities in the development of local Medical Reserve Corps (MRCs).

- Mass care and special needs populations
  Recommendations:
  1. Appropriate evacuation and sheltering plans for special needs populations, visitors to area.

- Isolation/quarantine issues (including services in home)
  Recommendations:
  1. Assure ability to implement and enforce mass isolation and/or quarantine at local level.

- Adequate funding for all public health and medical preparedness and response activities
  Recommendations:
  1. Advocate for increased federal and state funding for public health and healthcare emergency preparedness, including mental health planning and response.

Issue Area #2 - State Planning and Coordination

The Commonwealth uses the "preparedness organization" concept described in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) for preparation and maintenance of the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP). In accordance with this concept the State must continue to coordinate all agencies with a role in incident management. A forum must be provided for coordination of planning, training, equipping, and other preparedness requirements.

Also, The Commonwealth of Virginia Continuity of Operations Planning Program (COVCOOP) is an established effort aimed at ensuring the stability and continuation of essential governmental functions by the agencies/organizations of the three branches of state government during a wide range of potential emergencies and events.

Local Planning

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management provides guidance and assistance to localities in developing and maintaining their own Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and conducting an annual Local Capability Assessment for Readiness (LCAR), both of which are mandated under the *Emergency Services and Disaster Laws of 2000, as amended.*

As of December 2005, the number of current local EOPs is 113, or roughly 81% of the 140 jurisdictions within the Commonwealth that maintain an emergency management program.

While this is a significant increase accomplished through a one-time federal grant, many specific needs still have not been met. These outstanding needs include evacuation and shelter plans and capacity development for all areas of the state and COOP development for all localities.

Intelligence Fusion Center

The Departments of Emergency Management and State Police have been directed by Governor Warner to establish and operate an Intelligence Fusion Center to accept, analyze, triage, manage, and utilize all-sources of information in the prevention of terrorist acts. While the Intelligence Fusion Center is not staffed to support a fully manned "24/7" operation, sufficient personnel have been authorized to implement basic activities and subsequently determine the level of need for additional staff.

Priorities Include:
- Continuing to coordinate planning and training for all agencies with a role in incident management.
- Developing a State COOP Program Management Structure, including two stakeholder groups: The Secure Commonwealth Panel and the Statewide COOP Steering Committee.

Finally, proper staffing for Commonwealth Preparedness initiatives is imperative. A minimum of four additional personnel to support COOP and local planning enhancements is recommended.

Issue Area #3 - Improve Commonwealth relationships with the private sector for preparedness

- **Commonwealth relationships with the private sector for preparedness**
- **Critical Infrastructure Protection between Government and Private Sector**
- **Education and training of private industry regarding disaster preparedness and response**
- **Communications & technology/information sharing between public and private sector**

Background of Issue

The Commonwealth cannot and should not fund or address all of the risks involved with preparedness. It is critically important that Virginia rely on industry partnerships that are based on strong trusted relationships within those industry groups supporting Virginia's critical infrastructure. This is especially important given that the private sector owns, operates, and maintains approximately 85% of the nation's critical infrastructure today. DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff speaking to a private industry group stated, "The kind of true partnerships that protecting the homeland requires means that we not only *share* information but also responsibility. It means that we not only *exchange* expertise but also expect accountability."

There are three factors that have historically blocked close partnerships between government and the private sector. They are defined as follows. First, there is a distrust of motives from both sides. Much of this distrust has been created through the regulatory and oversight functions of

government on industry. Second, there is a lack of understanding of how government functions and, from the government side, a lack of understanding how businesses function. The third factor is that both sides seem to have the inability to speak with a single voice. The government side directs from different agencies (silos) and the business side from differing business or industry groups. The complete lack of a central point of contact for the private sector creates a major roadblock in establishing effective public/private partnerships.

Overcoming these roadblocks and developing strong trusting relationships with the private sector is a critical success factor in establishing public/private partnerships. The private sector must assist the government and play a key role in the planning and implementation of the initiative to secure the Commonwealth as well as embrace emergency preparedness as part of their corporate culture. The government needs to be willing to share information and responsibility, exchange expertise, and develop an effective communication strategy to ensure a successful alliance in public/private partnership.

Goals

1. Ensure effective management of the public/private collaborative process and establish a governance structure that includes broad representation.

2. The private sector should be an integral component of the Commonwealth's preparedness planning and response.

3. Improve public/private coordination on critical infrastructure emergency planning and exercises.

4. Increase the sharing of critical information with the private sector.

5. The public and private sectors need to be in agreement on which areas of critical infrastructure need the most improvement in emergency preparedness.

6. Develop a comprehensive plan for securing resources and critical infrastructures.

7. Enforce that all critical infrastructure industry partners develop and test security, disaster recovery, and continuity of operations plans.

8. Implement other "Push" technologies to get information out to private industry, specifically employees. Private industry needs to become an additional communication link and conduit for information flow from state to its citizenry (employees).

9. Regional awareness and preparedness programs need to be communicated to the private sector for disaster recovery and continuity of operations.

10. Break the "Silo" approach by having the State and Local government (Regional) take the lead in creating a central location to make information available to the Private Sector.

11. Develop a well-planned educational program to make the private sector and the citizens of the Commonwealth aware that the alert system is available.

Issue #4 - Local Issues: Pre and Post

"Lack of a Shared Vision Across Organizations"

Background of Issue:
State support to local governments is essential prior to, during and after an emergency event. It does not matter if the disaster is a result of natural causes, a terrorist event or human error.

Goals and Positions

1. Restructure the Commonwealth's Department of Fire Programs, Office of Medical Services, State Fire Marshal and Department of Emergency Management functions into one agency under one Secretariat.

2. Long-term codified commitment to the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness (OCP) . The OCP should be charged with ensuring that all agencies of state government are operating with a shared sense of vision as it relates to our Commonwealth's preparedness.

FUNDING

Background of Issue:
Until Governor Warner's administration, funding for Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) had been provided solely by grant programs. The general fund provided zero dollars for these core public safety services. Given the uncertainty of the financial commitment from the federal government, it is essential that the Commonwealth realizes its obligation to the safety of all its citizens. Fire and EMS funding must be maintained, strengthened and expanded to support the building and maintenance of "All Hazards" local, regional and state preparedness, response and recovery capacity. Current funding levels are not adequate to ensure that Virginia's Fire and EMS providers have safe staffing, adequate training and necessary equipment and apparatus.

Goals and Positions

1. Stop redirecting the growth of the Fire Programs Fund to non-fire related services.

2. Support the match for the Fire Programs Fund introduced by Governor Warner in his biennium budget proposal.

3. Establish the match as a permanent requirement in future budgetary processes by codifying it into the State Code.

4. Stop redirecting funds from the Four-for-Life Fund for non-Emergency Medical Services.

5. Continue to provide matching funds for the federal grant program, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER).

TRAINING

Background of Issue:

Training is an essential element in building and maintaining any public safety service. Keeping pace with changing technology and the evolving world we live in poses constant new challenges. State-required training protects the health and safety of fire fighters and emergency medical technicians while they are on the front line protecting the citizens of the Commonwealth. Since financial resources are not unlimited, it is imperative that government work in a creative and responsible manner so the best use can be made of all available resources. In Virginia, redundancy is commonplace; the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP), the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) all provide training.

Goals and Positions

1. Forge a strong permanent relationship between the VCCS, VDFP, OEMS and VDEM.

2. Based on views expressed in Issue # 1 (Lack of a Shared Vision Across Organizations) each of these agencies (VDFP, OEMS and VDEM) needs to be consolidated under one Secretariat. Once aligned, a training department should be created for first responders.

3. Virginia should avail itself of the free accredited training that meets national standards which is being delivered by public and private contractors funded through federal grant programs.

Baseline Health of First Responders

The Commonwealth of Virginia lacks a standardized and uniform system for documenting the baseline health of its first responders; lacks any standardized and uniform system for the reporting and inventory of occupational injuries and exposures on a shift by shift basis during critical responses; cannot yet process or facilitate documentation of mass casualties among first responders in critical response incidents; and finally, provides absolutely no follow up contact among first responders who may have been subjected to agents whose latency period may be years before illness may manifest, including stress related disorders such as post traumatic stress disorder.

Goals and Positions:

1. Every public safety employer should be compelled to use a standardized method for the screening of its employees to establish the baseline health of its first responders. A central master DNA data bank should be established of all first responders so that in the event of an event which results in the mass loss of first responders identities could be quickly made.

2. The Commonwealth of Virginia should develop a master injury/exposure report form to document any incident where a first responder either suffers an injury or exposure to a substance or element likely to result in a future health issue. Copies should be given to the employee, employer and retained in a central data bank for study and future contact should an issue later develop.

3. The Commonwealth of Virginia should appoint a Health, Hardship and Safety Officer at an executive level to quickly coordinate the request for assistance of any locality whose own employed first responders are overwhelmed or incapacitated at a critical event. This officer should have the authority to gather support first responders on a stand by basis and assist in the prompt dispatch of assistance as needs develop. The key is speed and no bottlenecks.

4. The Workers' Compensation Act must be overhauled with a process in place for speedy processing of mass injury or death of public safety employees in the event of a critical event.

5. The Commonwealth of Virginia should consider the implementation of a second tier of emergency response other than a declaration of a state of emergency. The second tier, such as a "Critical Event" or "Major Disaster" would still empower the Commonwealth with certain emergency powers, but would be done on a more local level and would result in faster implementation.

Issue #5 - Communications: Public Safety Communications Operability & Interoperability

Public Safety Operable and Interoperable Communications are essential to the successful mitigation of significant emergency events. While the Commonwealth of Virginia has been referenced as a model, it lacks some of the necessary ingredients to really effect interoperable communications throughout Virginia.

1. Research and define a minimum capability level for public safety communications (operable and interoperable).

2. Enhance Interoperability coordination and promotion across and between the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) and the Statewide Agencies Radio System (STARS) COMLINK.

3. The Kaine administration should seek statutory authority to create and fund the Office of Communications Interoperability and move this Office and the Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator into the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness.

4. Formalize the SIEC into a fully appointed Board.

5. Support proposed building code changes to facilitate in-building radio coverage to insure public safety operability within structures (high rise and wide span buildings).

6. Explore and expand role of private industry in the area of interoperable communications.

7. Develop and implement common standards and operational protocols---While the adoption of certain technical standards is contingent upon identification of the appropriate technology, others can and should be developed and implemented now.

Statewide Alerting Network: Notification to responders and citizens

Lessons from catastrophic events have identified the need to provide information quickly to first responders and citizens. Such information and instructions is invaluable at a time when chaos may occur without it.

1. Develop a Statewide Alerting Network.

2. Provide a Statewide Citizen Alerting Application to provide information to citizens that can be sent to various means of communications devices (i.e. email, wireless devices, alphanumeric pagers, cell phones, etc.) in order to provide instructions of what to do in time of crisis.

3. Develop a partnership with Commercial Wireless Vendors to explore methods of establishing an automatic subscription to the notification process (with an Opt Out requirement).

4. Develop a statewide website that will facilitate community/regional coordination in the aftermath of an emergency or disaster.

Statewide Situational Awareness: Implementation of WebEOC

Lessons from past catastrophic events and the potential for future events such as pandemic influenza have identified the need to provide and share information between state, local and first responder agencies for the purpose of enhanced situational awareness. Additionally, more coordination is needed among citizens and non-governmental aid organizations. Such information provides better situational awareness during an incident, better understanding of impact and ability to more effectively deploy resource assistance.

1. Develop a Statewide Strategy/Policy between the Commonwealth and localities in the access and use of WebEOC.

2. Provide training to support the implementation of WebEOC at state and local levels.

3. Continue to actively participate in the Capital Wireless Integrated Network (CapWIN) and explore opportunities where local governments/agencies may benefit from mobile data and/or applications that may otherwise be fiscally impossible.

Virginia Geographic Information Network (VGIN): Expand use to state and local public safety

It has been clearly proven that geographic information systems (GIS) can provide invaluable insight and the ability to analyze situations before, during and after natural and manmade disasters. The Virginia Geographic Information Network has made much progress in the development of statewide GIS information. Explore ways to expand the use of this GIS information to state and local public safety agencies.

1. Identify specific areas where state and local public safety may access and use the VGIN information and mapping to enhance the public safety agencies ability to better protect and serve their respective citizens.

2. Explore the availability, awareness and use of the VGIN information into Virginia's deployment of WebEOC (now in progress) and other similar projects.

3. Mapping should be available to capture critical infrastructure assets from which specific interests can be generated in a timely fashion especially when there are credible threats to a target facility.

Virginia Fusion Center: Expand information sharing to state and local Government and public safety

Information sharing between state and local governments and public safety agencies is key to effective prevention, response, mitigation and recovery to and from a catastrophic event. It is critical that prompt and reliable information is shared and that stovepipe limitations be identified and removed.

1. Include local representation in the development of the Virginia Statewide Fusion Center to provide input on what and how information can and should be exchanged between various levels of governments and information systems.

2. Explore and determine the best methods to build relationships of trust and credibility across all disciplines (law enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, fire departments, health departments, emergency management, etc.).

3. Explore expansion of state information sharing into the federal programs such as the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) to facilitate information distribution in a way that will be shared to neighboring states and to other participating agencies.

4. Utilize the statewide alerting network/application to provide timely information sharing through the various means of notification such as email, wireless devices, etc.

Issue Area #6 - Preparedness: Education and Training

Background of Issue: Although there has been progress across the Commonwealth in preparedness education and training, especially in the First Responder community, there is still inadequate understanding of appropriate individual and institutional response actions in the event of a large-scale terrorist incident or catastrophic natural disaster.

Recommendations:
1. Need to penetrate entire citizenry with education on preparation for, and response to, various types of disasters.
   a. Civil preparedness education programs should provide an understanding of: 1) the salient threats and initial response actions that individuals (and their communities) must be ready to take in the event of man-made or natural disasters, 2) the roles and responsibilities of relevant government agencies and private organizations in preparedness and response, and 3) how citizens will communicate with leaders to seek guidance or support during response and recovery.
   b. Education should be conducted through mass media, our school system (from middle school to college), civic organizations (churches, social organizations, etc.) and work places. Courses should use visual media to reinforce critical response actions that every person should be prepared to take.
   c. Preparedness training must actively involve leaders at every level of society, including community leaders from disadvantaged communities, in planning, training and providing motivational leadership for disaster preparedness, response and recovery.
2. Education and training should focus on achieving preparedness for a limited number of priority threat scenarios, including worst-case scenarios (possible nuclear incident) in some regions. The Commonwealth should work directly and closely with localities to tailor selected scenarios to the most likely and/or challenging threats they could realistically face.
3. Education programs should be tailored to the responsibilities that specific personnel will have in the event of a disaster. For example, the average person needs to know how to take care of his/her family and whether to shelter-in-place or travel to a pre-designated safe site. Training and education for First Responders, Citizen Emergency Response Teams (CERTs), and government leaders will be much more extensive. There also is a requirement for a program

(and personnel to staff the program) to orient and train spontaneous volunteers and supplementary personnel who arrive from adjacent areas to help with disaster relief.
4. The <u>behavioral health component</u> of disaster preparedness must be incorporated into all aspects of education and training, as it will be a major factor in successful response and recovery.

<u>Summary:</u> The Commonwealth's emergency preparedness training and education program must provide personnel at all levels (from the average citizen to senior officials) knowledge of required response actions, their respective roles and responsibilities, and how they can report problems, seek guidance, and obtain support in the case of a man-made or natural disaster.

Priorities With A Fiscal Impact
  ➢ Development of Regionally- and Locality-Specific Multi-jurisdictional Threat Scenarios and Preparedness Action Plans with Defined Individual and Organizational Training Competencies and Inclusion of Behavioral Health Components
  ➢ Development of Scenario-driven Course Materials that Promote an In-depth Understanding of Organizational Roles and Responsibilities
  ➢ Implementation of a Comprehensive, Commonwealth Preparedness Education Program that includes Diverse Populations and Cultures based on Empowerment and a "Culture of Preparedness"
  ➢ Sustaining an Effective Training, Credentialing and Exercise Program for First Responders and other Key Personnel, including Behavioral Health Disaster Support Providers
  ➢ Development and Implementation of Training and Orientation for Spontaneous Volunteers and Supplementary Personnel from adjacent areas during Mobilization phase of the Disaster Operation

Priorities With Little or No Fiscal Impact
  ○ Determining and Prioritizing Threat Scenarios as a Guide to Planning and Basis for Achieving Greater Understanding.
  ○ Determining, Documenting and Training for Individual and Organizational Roles and Responsibilities, thus Eliminating Uncertainties
  ○ Inclusion of diverse population community members in planning, training and motivational leadership to enhance participation and investment in preparedness and response activities
  ○ Incorporating the employment of faith based groups, advocacy groups for the disabled, civic organizations, etc., into disaster response plans, education, and training programs

Issue Area #7 - Capitol Region

There Needs to be Integration of State Preparedness Structures
  1. Put one office (Office of Commonwealth Preparedness) in charge
  2. Establish a Regional Approach
     Each region should be organized with a governance structure to accomplish the following:
        -represent all response disciplines, citizens, business and NGO's

-assess local/regional risks
-develop response plans appropriate to the risks faced in that region
-ensure an integration of those plans with other the other regions

   3. Establish a Standards Based Approach

Common understandings/definitions for preparedness (best practices) need to be set by OCP so that each region is prepared to handle its own emergencies and can quickly and easily give aid to, or receive aid from, another region.

Relationships with Federal Departments (including the Military) and Agencies Must Be Clear

1. Local jurisdictions must be included in decision-making between state and federal authorities (including the military)
2. The state needs to support localities so they can efficiently interact with federal authorities both for preparation and planning and during an event.

Communication at All Levels Must be Clear and Timely

1. Lines of communication and authority need to be made clear
2. Who will inform whom and when must be clear at all levels for preparedness
3. Who will inform whom and when must be clear at all levels for response

Public Preparedness/Building Resilient Communities

The public and private sector is often absent from preparedness planning, or not effectively present. Most people are not clear about what might be expected of them in an emergency and how they should prepare.

1. Simple public alert and communication systems must be set up and then communicated to the public and private sector.
2. Simple instructions about what to be prepared for and how to prepare need to be developed and then communicated to the public and private sector
3. Once #1 and #2 are developed, an extensive and ongoing public education campaign is needed.
4. Evacuation in Northern Virginia will require special planning, preparation, communication, and public education.
5. Standards for what makes a resilient community need to be developed.

Issue #8 - Hampton Roads

One of the major impediments to effective response operations in the Commonwealth is the absolute autonomy of local jurisdictions and the seeming lack of direct linkage to, or authority of, the state to direct or more importantly orchestrate the actions of local resources in response to **extreme** situations (natural or man made).

This perceived gap in the lines of authority between State and local jurisdiction planners and responders has contributed to the following shortfalls with respect to first response planning and execution:

- Slow implementation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as the response organization tool for all incidents,
- Reduced effectiveness of vertical and horizontal interagency exercise planning (State, local, and Federal levels),
- Less than maximum exploitation of DHS security and other grant programs available to first responders,
- Inability to solve the interagency first responder and public communications interoperability issues, and
- Less than effective interagency security planning (State, local, and Federal levels).

A clear and distinct linkage between local jurisdictions and State level decision-makers is necessary before truly effective measures can be taken to solve the issues mentioned above. Seek to enact legislation that strengthens the authority and expertise base of Regional and State level EOC Directors for those **large scale situations / incidents** which cross jurisdictional lines for Disaster Response, Law Enforcement and Public Safety in general. Or in other words, create in law a clearly defined chain of command from the Governor's office right down to / through each Mayor's office. A clearly defined chain of command will not only enhance the Commonwealth's ability to effectively address the issues mentioned above, it will also help avoid many of the pitfalls encountered by the Gulf region during its response to hurricane Katrina.

APPENDIX

Issue Area #1

Health and Medical Emergency Preparedness and Support Services

Background of issue:

Assumptions: All planning efforts will enhance the ability of public health and the healthcare delivery systems to respond to all man-made and natural disasters, including but not limited to terrorism incidents.

Assure public health and healthcare surge capacity

Background of Issue: Many emergencies will result in mass casualties and/or fatalities, requiring public health and healthcare systems to care for large numbers of patients, either over a short period of time, as with a single emergency event, or over a prolonged period of time, as with an infectious disease outbreak such as a pandemic of influenza. Surge in medical care will require increased facility space, equipment, supplies, isolation capability and personnel and must include surge capacity within and outside hospitals. Public health surge includes the ability to address mass injuries and/or deaths, food and water safety, surveillance and investigation of large numbers of people with infectious diseases, injuries or toxic/radiologic substance exposure, isolation and quarantine, and mass prophylaxis (addressed as Issue #2).

<u>Recommendations</u>

1. **Continue to support increased hospital surge capacity, which has mainly been through federal funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).** The federal HRSA grant has funded, and continues to fund, purchase of additional supplies, medications and equipment, expansion of isolation capability, establishment of communications systems. A key challenge will remain inadequate numbers of healthcare personnel to provide healthcare services. It is essential to continue expanding volunteer efforts statewide, and continue to expand equipment, supplies and medication caches.

2. **Support, and if possible expand, the trauma system in Virginia.** This will require increased federal and state support of trauma services, since emergency explosive events will remain a significant risk.

3. **Encourage and support community surge efforts.** Hospitals and health departments alone cannot address all the community needs for medical surge capacity. There needs to be involvement of local government leaders and emergency managers in planning for medical surge within their communities. Since most healthcare is provided through the private sector, this involves a major private/public partnership effort. Local Mass Casualty Plans have not addressed the entire spectrum of medical surge issues in the past.

Assure the ability to provide mass prophylaxis with medications or vaccines

<u>Background of Issue</u>: In the event of a large bioterrorism event or large outbreak of an infectious disease such as a pandemic of influenza, it is essential that large numbers of people are able to receive prophylactic medications or vaccines in a short period of time. Virginia has mass prophylaxis plans in place at state and local levels, and these plans have been tested at least annually since 2002. Virginia is one of only 7 states that has received the highest rating (green rating) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for management of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS), a federal stockpile of medications and equipment that can be delivered to the state on short notice. Once any part of the SNS arrives in Virginia, it is the responsibility of the state to manage receipt and distribution of the stockpile. This will be accomplished through collaborative efforts of VDH, VDEM, VDOT, state police, DGS, Dept of Corrections, National Guard, other state agencies, local government and agencies and the private sector; the UPS contract with the Commonwealth now includes statewide responsibility for delivery of the SNS.

<u>Recommendations:</u>

1. **Assure continued ability to manage the SNS.** This will be accomplished through frequent exercises with all involved agencies and other entities, as well as through plans for ongoing vaccine or medication distribution efforts, such as dispensing of annual influenza vaccine

2. **Incorporate mass dispensing efforts into specific plans, such as the state Pandemic Influenza Plan, and ensure capability to address all hazards situations.**

Mental health support of responders, providers and the public

Background of Issue: Any emergency event will be stressful for responders, providers and the general public, impacting their mental health and ability to respond appropriately to events. It is important to recognize that the need for mental and behavioral health support will extend far beyond the period of physical recovery from an emergency event. Support services were needed in Northern Virginia for at least 18-24 months beyond September 11, 2001 and the sniper attacks of 2003.

Recommendations:
1. **Assure support for mental health response planning at state and local levels, and for support services at least 18 months beyond an emergency event.** Support will need to be available for responders, providers as well as the general public. Planning needs to be a collaborative effort with the Department of Mental Health Mental Retardation, Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS), Community Services Boards (CSBs), VDH at state and local levels and mental health providers in the private healthcare community. DMHMRSAS and the CSBs receive some funding through the HRSA preparedness grant for hospitals and the healthcare system but increased funding is needed for both planning and implementation of a mental health response to emergency events, recognizing that services will need to continue for at least 18 months beyond any event.

Mortality management
Background of Issue: Many emergencies can result in a significant number of deaths. In a terrorism situation, these deaths will all need to be assessed by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) **for identification, cause of death, manner of death, and recovery of criminal evidence** since they will result from a crime or crimes. Other disasters, as well as infectious disease outbreak situations, will also require significant time and resources of the OCME. Virginia has a highly regarded statewide Medical Examiner System which, with additional resources, can respond to all hazards events anywhere.

Recommendations:
1. **Develop a State Mortuary Response Team, a Virginia DMORT and a Disaster Portable Mortuary Unit.** Twelve critical medical investigator positions are needed for adequate response to emergencies in any part of the state. Investigators and funding is also needed to implement MED-X, the CDC surveillance system for deaths due to terrorism.
2. **Develop private and public partnerships to develop a plan for timely body recovery and preservation during an emergency.** Failure to recover remains promptly impairs identification, examination, investigation and return of remains.
3. **Develop MOUs with federal agencies acknowledging Virginia jurisdiction over events in Virginia.** Interaction with federal authorities is key; jurisdiction over the dead was an issue with the Pentagon crash on September 11, 2001.
4. **Develop a single interoperable computer system for missing persons and unidentified body parts for family assistance centers and medical examiners.** This is a need nationally and essential for disasters that cross state jurisdictional lines.
5. **Policies need to be developed for testing of fragmented remains and management of unclaimed and hazardous remains.**
6. **Virginia must develop a Family Assistance Center that will work closely with the OCME to assure services and support for families of the dead.**

Assure the ability to respond to all infectious disease outbreaks and other hazards

Background of Issue: The initial focus of federal funding was on preparedness and response to bioterrorism, initiated by the anthrax postal incidents in 2001. There is increasing recognition that a many infectious diseases are a risk to public health, with the recent focus on preparedness for a possible pandemic of influenza. It is also essential to prepare for chemical and radiologic hazards, including management of suspicious substances.

Recommendations:
1. **Assure the capability to provide surveillance and investigation for a broad range of infectious diseases as well as chemical and radiologic hazards.** This requires maintaining epidemiology capability statewide. The CDC funding funds a large number of epidemiology positions statewide; should this funding be cut significantly, other funding will be necessary to assure adequate epidemiology capability and capacity.
2. **Establish and maintain surveillance systems statewide.** Electronic surveillance systems are being established in 2-3 regions of the state through federal funding. Other funding will be necessary to expand surveillance to other regions of the state.
3. **Maintain laboratory capability to identify and monitor both biologic and chemical hazards.** The Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services (DCLS) has enhanced biologic and chemical identification capability and capacity through federal funding. This funding will need to be maintained to assure continued laboratory ability to respond to biologic or chemical events.
4. **A cross agency approach is essential for handling and response to suspicious substances.** This includes collaboration among law enforcement, first responders, health departments and the state laboratory.
5. **Enhance public information and outreach capability to assure the public has information appropriate to response for a broad range of threats.**

Increase public/private collaboration in health planning and response activities
Background of Issue: Most health care is provided in the private sector. The ability of the healthcare system to plan and respond to emergencies requires significant private/public partnerships.

Recommendations:
1. **Enhance collaboration between VDH and all healthcare providers, including hospitals and healthcare professionals.** Hospitals have been involved in regional and statewide planning for almost 4 years now. Increased efforts are necessary to better engage healthcare professionals in emergency planning.
2. **Address issues related to response of private healthcare providers to emergencies both within and outside Virginia.** While state assets can be moved from one part of the state to another if needed, as well as moved out of state through state to state EMAC, liability, credentialing and payment issues are major concerns for the private healthcare community, which also wants to be able to assist with emergencies both in and out of Virginia. Examination of EMAC and liability issues should be done to address concerns within the private healthcare sector.

Enhance recruitment and training of volunteers

Background of Issue: Volunteers are essential for adequate medical surge response to a large emergency event, as well as for the functioning of mass prophylaxis clinics. There are not enough trained personnel in either hospitals and the healthcare system, or in the public health system, to respond to the needs of the population when large numbers of people require medical or public health services.

Recommendations:
1. **Support localities in the development of local Medical Reserve Corps (MRCs).** While some MRCs receive some federal funding, many have no external funding. Support is needed to organize MRCs, communicate with volunteers, register and document credentials and skills, track volunteers, plus assure volunteer training.

Mass care and special needs populations

Background of Issue: The American Red Cross has been responsible for establishing and running shelters during disasters, with assistance from local health departments and social services. With an increasing number of elderly, medically frail and other special needs populations, there is a need to address sheltering, maintenance of other services and if necessary, evacuation of these and other special needs populations.

Recommendations:
1. **Establish collaborative planning with the American Red Cross, VDH, Department of Social Services, Department for the Aging, government officials and other private and public groups to plan provision of services to special needs populations, including the medically fragile, during emergencies.** This planning will mainly need to occur within localities to address the needs of communities and populations living in each locality. At the state level, agencies and private organization can assist with establishing policies appropriate for each identified population with special needs.
2. **Assure that state and localities have appropriate evacuation and sheltering plans for identified special needs populations.**
3. **Be certain that localities have policies to address the needs of visitors during emergencies.** This is especially important for areas with large tourist populations.

Isolation/quarantine issues (including services in home)

Background of issue: Through recent legislation, the isolation and quarantine authority of the State Health Commissioner has been better defined, especially for large emergency events that may require isolation and/or quarantine of geographic areas or large number of people. Many issues remain to be resolved in terms of implementation of mass isolation and/or quarantine at the local level.

Recommendations:
1. **Assure that policies are in place at the local level concerning implementation of mass isolation and/or quarantine.** VDH has developed regulations and guidelines for implementation of mass isolation and quarantine at both state and local levels. Localities need to

assure that people who are isolated or quarantined at home are able to receive essential services while confined.

2. **Assure that policies are in place to enforce isolation and/or quarantine.** Through recent legislation, law enforcement now has the authority to enforce isolation and/or quarantine. Appropriate policies are needed for law enforcement procedures at both the state and local levels.

Assure adequate funding for all public health and medical preparedness and response activities

Background of Issue: Most funding for public health and healthcare preparedness in Virginia has been through federal funding from the CDC and HRSA. In FY 06 the CDC funding will be cut by almost 18% which will impact the ability of public health and healthcare systems to plan and respond to emergencies.

Recommendations:
1. **Advocate for increased federal funding for public health and healthcare emergency preparedness, including mental health planning and response.** Virginia has been successful in coordinating response and planning efforts. In 2005, the Trust for America's Health ranked Virginia in the top 3 states for pubic health and healthcare preparedness. These efforts will be jeopardized with federal funding cuts.
2. **Consider the need for increased state funding for public health and healthcare preparedness and response activities.** This will be especially crucial should federal funding continue to be cut significantly.

Issue Area #2

State Planning and Coordination

Background of issue:

The Commonwealth uses the "preparedness organization" concept described in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) for preparation and maintenance of the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP). The Secure Commonwealth Panel (SCP), the Emergency Coordination Officers Group (ECOG), and the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) are the primary state level organizations for emergency preparedness activities. The SCP serves as the senior oversight group for the COVEOP, providing an interagency forum for review of emergency planning, policy guidance, and issues resolution. The ECOG serves as the interagency planning group for preparedness and is comprised of VERT agency Emergency Coordination Officers (ECOs) who are responsible for developing plans and procedures, incorporating lessons learned and best practices, ensuring functional coordination and updating assigned portions of the COVEOP. The VERT is comprised of representatives of the State's departments/agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) assigned duties and responsibilities within the COVEOP who staff the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC), Joint Field Office (JFO) and other organizational elements implementing the State's emergency response and recovery efforts.

1. Continue to coordinate all agencies with a role in incident management. Provide a forum for coordination of planning, training, equipping, and other preparedness requirements.

2. Revise the Commonwealth of Virginia Coordination Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP).
   Must align format and plan structure with that of the National Response Plan. Also, incorporate lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina and Rita.

3. Establish roles for the Secretariats during all the phases of emergency management. Prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery are top four roles/priorities.

   a. Core Function Annexes will give way to Emergency Support Function Annexes. Under this new format, program volumes of the current COVEOP will become Support Annexes or stand alone plans and the hazard volumes will become Incident Annexes.

Funding

Background of issue:

The obligation of government is to provide seamless services, especially those involving public safety and health, in spite of any event. Born out of earlier Executive Order initiatives and more recent legislative action amending § 44-146.18 of the Code of Virginia, The Commonwealth of Virginia Continuity of Operations Program (COVCOOP) is an effort to ensure the stability and continuation of essential governmental functions by the agencies/organizations of the three branches of state government during a wide range of potential emergencies and events.

1. Using its current staffing supplemented with Homeland Security Grant funded consultants the Virginia Department of Emergency Management has:

   Performed an in-depth review of the Continuity of Operations Program of each VERT agency.

   Developed a State COOP Program Management Structure, including two stakeholder groups:

   a. The Secure Commonwealth Panel serves as the senior oversight group for the COVCOOP and provides an interagency forum for review of COOP planning, policy guidance, and issues resolution.

   b. The Statewide COOP Steering Committee is comprised of key agency planners who represent the interests of their respective agencies and Secretariats.

Published specific and detailed guidance for all (112) executive branch agencies COOP plan development.

Developed and delivered follow-up COOP training to executive branch agencies as well as agencies of the legislative and judicial branches.

2. The development of an overarching system for the coordinated and prioritized restoration and resumption of services is necessary to ensure continuation of essential governmental functions following a multi-agency disruptive event, a regional emergency, or a statewide major/catastrophic disaster.

Current staffing and budgetary levels severely limit VDEM's ability to provide this strategic capability since they have no personnel assigned to support COOP activities.

While current status of COOP plans for state agencies is satisfactory, a minimum of two personnel should be funded to further develop and maintain COOP capabilities at the state level and to encourage and support COOP local development.

Local Planning

Background of issue:

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management provides guidance and assistance to localities in developing and maintaining their own Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and conducting an annual Local Capability Assessment for Readiness (LCAR), both of which are mandated under the *Emergency Services and Disaster Laws of 2000, as amended.*

1. The number of current local EOPs in the Commonwealth has increased significantly since 2002. As of December 2005, the number of current local EOPs is 113, or roughly 81% of the 140 jurisdictions within the Commonwealth that maintain an emergency management program. Additional funding has allowed for this significant increase.

2. The challenges faced by VDEM are numerous in keeping our local communities prepared.
   The Local Planning Assistance and the Hurricane Preparedness Branches of the agency are each staffed with one full-time person.
   In addition to their basic responsibilities, these two planners and one part-time planner are the only individuals are working with major cities, including the coastal communities and the National Capitol Region (NCR), to develop evacuation and sheltering plans for special populations as well as developing a host-sheltering plan supported by the impacted and non-impacted localities.
   This project has been static for years over reimbursement concerns. These challenges can be overcome, but not at current staffing or funding levels.

Intelligence Fusion Center

Background of issue:

The Departments of Emergency Management and State Police have been directed by Governor Warner to establish and operate an Intelligence Fusion Center to accept, analyze, triage, manage, and utilize all-source information in the prevention of terrorist acts.

1. The Departments of State Police (lead agency) and Emergency Management will provide for the physical integration of the Virginia Criminal Intelligence Center and Virginia Emergency Operations Center to create a "central information fusion center" concurrent with the construction of the new State Police Headquarters and Department of Emergency Management Emergency Operations Center.

This integration provides for necessary separation of core functions of both but achieves information integration between consequence and law enforcement functions as it relates to "homeland security" intelligence sharing.

2. Analysts from VSP and VDEM, along with selected personnel from other state agencies will work in concert with the VSP Counter Terrorism Analytical Unit to receive, review, analyze, summarize and disseminate information from a wide range of sources both classified and open source.

They will monitor terrorism threat and event situations and maintain ongoing communications with all levels of government and appropriate functions to insure coordinated prevention, interdiction and response activities.

While the Intelligence Fusion Center is not staffed to support a fully manned "24/7" operation, sufficient personnel have been authorized to implement basic activities and subsequently determine the level of need for additional staff.

Goals of the Governor- Elect for Commonwealth Preparedness State Planning, Coordination, and Funding

Priorities with no fiscal impact:

Continue to coordinate all agencies with a role in incident management.
Provide a forum for coordination of planning, training, equipping, and other preparedness requirements.

Revise the Commonwealth of Virginia Coordination Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP). Must align format and plan structure with that of the National Response Plan. Also, incorporate lessons learned from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Establish roles for the Secretariats during all the phases of emergency   management. Prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery are top four roles/priorities.

Core Function Annexes will give way to Emergency Support Function Annexes. Under this new format, program volumes of the current COVEOP will become Support Annexes or stand alone plans and the hazard volumes will become Incident Annexes.

Utilize information that has already been complied to include:

In-depth review of the Continuity of Operations Program of each VERT agency.

Developed a State COOP Program Management Structure, including two stakeholder groups: The Secure Commonwealth Panel and the Statewide COOP Steering Committee.

Detailed guidance for all (112) executive branch agencies COOP plan development.

Priorities with a Fiscal Impact:

Staffing for Commonwealth Preparedness initiatives is imperative for success for all of the above-mentioned programs.

A minimum of two personnel should be funded to further develop and maintain COOP capabilities.

The Local Planning Assistance and the Hurricane Preparedness Branches of the agency are each staffed with one full-time person. In addition to their basic responsibilities, these two planners and one part-time planner are the only individuals working with major cities, including the coastal communities and the National Capitol Region (NCR), to develop evacuation and sheltering plans for special populations as well as developing a host-sheltering plan supported by the impacted and non-impacted localities. **(This project has been static for years over reimbursement concerns. These challenges can be overcome, but not at current staffing or funding levels).**

The Departments of State Police (lead agency) and Emergency Management will provide for the physical integration of the Virginia Criminal Intelligence Center and Virginia Emergency Operations Center to create a "central information fusion center".

Analysts from VSP and VDEM, along with selected personnel from other state agencies will work in concert with the VSP Counter Terrorism Analytical Unit to receive, review, analyze, summarize and disseminate information from a wide range of sources both classified and open source. They will monitor terrorism threat and event situations and maintain ongoing communications with all levels of government and appropriate functions to insure coordinated prevention, interdiction and response activities.

While the Intelligence Fusion Center is not staffed to support a fully manned "24/7" operation, sufficient personnel have been authorized to implement basic activities and subsequently **determine the level of need for additional staff.**

Issue Area #3

Improve Commonwealth relationships with the private sector for preparedness

<u>Background of Issue</u>

The Commonwealth cannot and should not fund or address all of the risks involved with preparedness. It is critically important that Virginia rely on industry partnerships that are based on strong trusted relationships within those industry groups supporting Virginia's critical infrastructure. This is especially important given that the private sector owns, operates, and maintains approximately 85% of the nation's critical infrastructure today. DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff speaking to a private industry group stated, "The kind of true partnerships that protecting the homeland requires means that we not only *share* information but also responsibility. It means that we not only *exchange* expertise but also expect accountability."

There are three factors that have historically blocked close partnerships between government and the private sector. They are defined as follows. First, there is a distrust of motives from both sides. Much of this distrust has been created through the regulatory and oversight functions of government on industry. Second, there is a lack of understanding of how government functions and, from the government side, a lack of understanding how businesses function. The third factor is that both sides seem to have the inability to speak with a single voice. The government side directs from different agencies and the business side from differing business or industry groups. The complete lack of a central point of contact for the private sector creates a major roadblock in establishing public/private partnerships.

Overcoming these roadblocks and developing strong trusting relationships with the private sector is a critical success factor in establishing public/private partnerships. The private sector must assist the government and play a key role in the planning and implementation of the initiative to secure the Commonwealth as well as embrace emergency preparedness as part of their corporate culture. The government needs to be willing to share information and responsibility, exchange expertise, and develop an effective communication strategy to ensure a successful alliance in public/private partnership.

1. Ensure effective management of the public/private collaborative process.

   Establish a governance structure that includes broad representation from all appropriate entities at the State and local level, as well as from the private sector, for information sharing and preparedness planning.

2. The private sector should be an integral component of the Commonwealth's preparedness planning and response.

   The private sector must be a partner in every aspect of preparedness planning, including information sharing and participation in exercises and recovery strategies. Private sector firms bring many specialized skills, unique talents, and resources. These should be utilized by the public sector for emergency situations. Capabilities

such as health care workers, electric power work crews, fiber optic repair teams, fuel transport, specialized construction, clean up and excavation can be critical responding to an event.

3. Improve communication between the public and private sectors on security and preparedness.

The public/private partnership needs to create a communications framework that designates how communication will occur on a regular informative basis as well as in emergency situations. This communication framework should be integrated with the Commonwealth's "Fusion Center" effort and establish the communication foundation. This framework will need to be tested and exercised on a regular basis to ensure compatibility and to establish communication benchmarks. Private industry needs to ensure that their business has developed a business continuity/disaster recovery plan as well as security plans for the employees and company assets. The government can use local Chambers of Commerce and other local business organizations to disseminate information regarding emergency preparedness and security awareness. Joint "town hall" meetings can be scheduled to bring both sectors to the table in the interest of true community preparedness.

4. Improve public/private coordination on critical infrastructure emergency planning and exercises.

Addressing the "single voice" hurdle the private sector should utilize existing structures to coordinate into the Commonwealth's preparedness network. By using business continuity 'interest groups" as a resource to provide business sector representation in the Commonwealth's emergency operations centers, government and business can more effectively communicate and coordinate during an emergency response. The public/private sector partnership needs to identify key businesses critical to ensure ongoing continuity of basic services and work with those businesses to ensure continuity of service in case of a disaster or emergency. The Commonwealth needs to promote and participate in joint training and exercises with the private sector. The public/private partnership needs to identify those "at-risk" industries, such as utilities, water treatment plants, chemical and nuclear plants, as well as, air, rail, and maritime, and establish a mechanism that certifies that specific preparedness and precautionary measures are implemented.

5. Increase the sharing of critical information with the private sector.

While there is a great need for the sharing of critical information, the implementation will be a very difficult challenge. Until there is a reassessment of how data is classified, data and information sharing will be at a low level of classification. The private sector believes that we are in a new era where robust sharing of intelligence information must be the norm, not the exception. Public/private partnerships must assess the level of classification and determine what information can be shared. The government and private sector need to work collaboratively to determine and develop

a legal framework, and reassess how information is classified with the goal of classifying less and sharing more.

6. The public and private sectors need to be in agreement on which areas of critical infrastructure need the most improvement in emergency preparedness.

The public and private sector need to develop a common list of threats to Virginia's critical infrastructure and needs to determine which infrastructures require additional emergency preparation. A common definition of threat also needs to be defined so that the public and private sector can determine the level of preparedness necessary to respond effectively to the threat. Business should be prepared for disasters ranging from terrorist attacks, natural disasters, pandemic diseases, to IT infrastructure failures.

Critical Infrastructure Protection between Government and Private Sector

Background of the Issue

In order for the Commonwealth, and the nation to maintain financial viability, disruption in any of the identified critical infrastructure must be prevented. The events of September 11, 2001 demonstrated the impact of the disruption that sent waves throughout the nation. The private sector owns, operates, and maintains approximately 85% of the nation's critical infrastructure today. There is a joint responsibility between the State and the private sector to maintain the security of the critical infrastructure. However, because of overall impact to the nation, there are some responsibilities that must be identified that require federal intervention.

1. Receipt of and analysis of intelligence, law enforcement information and other communication in order to understand the threat to the Commonwealth, and therefore be able to detect, identify and communicate potential threats.

The primary ability to receive information of threats (primarily terrorist events) rests with the Federal Government. Accordingly, appropriate communication channels between the federal government and the State must be developed. The local governments have responsibilities of working with the private structure for securing facilities, and must therefore be included in coordinated communications and response.

For other threats to the private sector, each must develop its internal systems to access available information and be positioned to act when other events (natural disasters, health related emergencies, etc.) threaten the area.

An appropriate channel must be in place that allows communication of events that are identified to all impacted parties.

2. Procurement of technology and systems for detecting, preventing, protecting against terrorist attacks using chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or related weapons and materials.

In this arena, the federal government should be playing a primary role because of the national impact. However the state must be involved in the understanding of development in these areas. The information must be readily disseminated to the impacted parties.

The private sector must be engaged in the development of the technologies needed for detection and should be encouraged to work in this arena for the protection of the state, its employees and the citizenry.

3. Development of a comprehensive plan for securing resources, and critical infrastructures.

   The state is challenged with identification of all of the critical infrastructures and other key resources that are resident within its borders. Vulnerability assessments must be conducted and the necessary countermeasures identified and put in place.

   While the private sector will have the financial responsibility of implementing countermeasures, it is important that the risks and response measures are communicated to responders so that there is shared understanding of the areas in which there is dependence on external resources.

4. Development of a disaster recovery plan for facilities, employees, and the citizenry.

   Within the private sector, development of internal first responder capability should be encouraged, or in the absence of necessary personnel within facilities, the identification of external responders must be completed (with emphasis on ensuring availability of resources). The plan must cover information to be shared with the local areas for on-going protection of the citizens.

5. Development and testing of scenarios for conducting of drills.

   In order to assure the adequacy of response to the developed disaster recovery plans, it is necessary to assess the ability of all personnel to respond as planned. Worse case scenarios must be identified and executed with all parties identifying key learnings and implementing upgrades to ensure adequacy of the response in the event of an actual emergency.

Transportation between Government and Private Sector

Background of the Issue

The maintenance of commerce, transportation of citizens and ability of emergency responders to effectively conduct their work is dependent on the viability of our varying modes of transportation in the Commonwealth. Because availability of these modes is directly under the control of the government, it is critical that analysis be done prior to an event and that appropriate contingencies are developed to ensure continuity of operations if one or more modes

of transportation were disrupted. Communication of these plans is critical between the private and public sectors so that necessary pre-planning can be done and countermeasures identified. Realistic recognition of loss of services must be identified and communicated in order that appropriate prioritization can be completed to ensure the smoothest and most effective transition back to normal operations can be managed.

The first three items listed below are primary responsibility of the government. Inability to successfully manage in these three areas will result in impact to the private sector.

1. Securing the borders, territorial waters, ports, terminals, waterways, and air, land, and sea transportation systems of the State and the nation.

2. Preventing the importation of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or related weapons and materials used in terrorist attacks.

3. Ensuring the speedy, orderly, and efficient resumption of flow of lawful traffic and commerce.

4. Identifying and supporting alternate ports, terminals, waterways, and air, land, and sea transportation systems in the event of the disruption of one or more modes of transportation simultaneously.

As part of the private (and public) sectors' evaluation of ability to receive essential materials and ship products, each must identify alternate routes of transportation and the ability to deliver goods needed in commerce, and the delayed timeline. In certain areas, the government may be required to aid in providing accompaniment (and security) for delivery of materials in the alternate routes that are identified. Communication of these alternate routes is required between the private and public sectors.

Improve education and training of private industry regarding disaster preparedness and response

Background of Issue

The Commonwealth is dependent on local governments to prepare its citizenry on how to react in times of disaster. What is overlooked, though, is that most of the population will be at their workplace if a disaster strikes during the day. Therefore, private industry needs to prepare its employees on how to react to an emergency. Most jurisdictions in Northern Virginia are encouraging the policy of "secure in place" as transportation systems will be clogged. Employees, though, will immediately want to be in touch with family and will be trying to determine how to get to their loved ones. With this in mind, private industry needs to address how to work with its employees and regional authorities to create a safe an efficient environment for individuals living and working in the area.

Four key points are outlined below. Much of the information that is highlighted here can also be found in the appendices of the Commonwealth of Virginia's "Secure Commonwealth Initiative

Strategic Plan". Appendix 1-5 specifically addresses Public/Private cooperation. The Public/Private Cooperation Task Force put together a very thorough document with very clear recommendations that would benefit private industry in its efforts to prepare for an emergency.

1. Push technology needs to be implemented to get information out to private industry, specifically employees.

   Traditionally, citizens have expected their state and local governments to provide for them in times of disaster. Most communities have put in place communication plans to help citizens in times of crisis. Such methods as posting on the government's web site and broadcasting on local television and radio stations are currently being utilized. Push technology needs to be implemented. In times of disaster, citizens will not think to turn to the internet to find data, especially if communication systems are down. The Washington Metropolitan area's Council of Governments (COG) implemented a "Be Ready Make a Plan" campaign that was launched through radio ads and newspaper. Included with this campaign is a wallet-sized card that individuals can use to prepare their family for emergencies. Such a campaign for employees would be beneficial.

2. Industry needs to put emergency preparedness plans in place.

   Most of the population will be at their workplace if a disaster occurs during the day. Private industry needs to train their employees on what they should do during an emergency. This type of training happens for disasters such as a fire in the building; companies need to augment this with training for other types of emergencies. Designing a "Five Easy Steps to Emergency Preparedness" template would help companies that do not know where to begin in their effort to put together a plan. Incentives such as an "Emergency Preparedness Certified" sticker could be produced and given to each company that has been assessed by local authorities as prepared.

3. Regional preparedness needs to be communicated to the areas affected.

   As stated above, most local jurisdictions have emergency preparedness plans in place, but the general community has not been trained in these plans, particularly if they live in one jurisdiction and work in another. Private industry need to utilize the public officials for its jurisdiction to educate its staff on local emergency plans. This could be marketed through local Chambers of Commerce and other local business organizations. Conferences could be conducted to train personnel on what to do during an emergency.

4. Private industry needs to increase their awareness of cyber security, especially in small businesses.

   Most large corporations are aware of the havoc that a breach in cyber security can incur on their company. Small businesses may not be as aware. A "mentor/protégé" program between companies that understand cyber security and those that do not

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would help train smaller businesses in what to do to protect their infrastructure. Producing a "Cyber Security Guide for Small Business" would also be beneficial.

Communications and Technology/Information Sharing between Government and Private Sector

Background of the Issue

After September 11, and the recent hurricanes that hit the gulf coast it is clear that communications between public and private sector groups including the citizens of the Commonwealth is more critical than ever. This is an obvious need given that the private sector owns, operates, and maintains approximately 85% of the nation's critical infrastructure today. Citizens and non governmental organizations, such as the Citizens Corps, the Virginia Corps, and other groups, make up the backbone of the private sector groups operating in the Commonwealth.

The problem the Commonwealth faces is the same, in both government and the private sector. Each entity has set each department, organization into Silos which do not share information well, or not at all. This Silo approach will only be overcome with State and Local government taking the lead in creating a central location to make information available to the Private Sector. This can only be done with commitment from both parties and by using technologies that are readily available and interesting enough developed here in the Commonwealth.

1. The State needs to complete the development of the web site for emergency information which is specifically designed for the private sector. This web site is to have information relating to preparedness and necessary action in case of an emergency.

2. Implement Technology such as Web Broadcast™ which will use the web site described in the paragraph above. This technology will allow the Commonwealth to develop a multi channel inbound/outbound system that will pull needed information from the central web site.

3. Develop in conjunction with the web site and Web Broadcast™ a method via web interfaces for the private sector to inject their specific contact and preferred method of contact for general updates (educational), and emergency notification. This will put the responsibility on each citizen to maintain their own contact information, and preferred method of contact.

4. Develop a well planned educational program to make the private sector and the citizens of the Commonwealth aware that the alert system is available, and need for groups and individual citizens to input, and maintain their contact information.

5. Create the needed cultural change so that government and the private sector will collaborate and strengthen the partnership between these two sectors for the betterment of the Citizens of the Commonwealth.

Issue #4

Local Issues: Pre and Post Subcommittee

Lack of a Shared Vision Across Organizations

Background of Issue

State support to local governments is essential prior to, during and after an emergency event. It does not matter if the disaster is a result of natural causes, a terrorist event or human error. It is imperative that all state agencies responsible for this support have a sense of common purpose. During the U.S. Congressional Confirmation Hearing of George Foresman (former Assistant to Governor Warner for Commonwealth Preparedness) for the position of Undersecretary of Domestic Preparedness, Mr. Foresman commented that the biggest problem faced in Virginia during hurricane Isabel was "a lack of common vision across organizations." This is not surprising given the current configuration of state agencies relevant to support of first responders. As a result, just like the federal government, these state agencies act as competitors, not partners.

<u>Goals and Positions</u>

1. Restructure the Commonwealth's Department of Fire Programs, Office of Medical Services, State Fire Marshal and Department of Emergency Management functions into one agency under one Secretariat.

   - This effort would be resisted by some, but would prove to be beneficial in the long term. Cost effectiveness and accountability (to both state and local government) would be realized. Training would be more effectively delivered across the state, especially in rural areas where the need is the greatest. This would be the first major step that would lay the groundwork for an enhanced capacity to emergency events within our boundaries and outside the state.

2. Long-term codified commitment to the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness (OCP)

   - The OCP has the necessary ability to operate and coordinate policy across the different secretariats. This was absolutely essential during the Secure Commonwealth Committee process responsible for the development of the state's Strategic Plan. A plan is just a plan if its recommendations are not carried out, progress is not evaluated and refinements are not made. Given the threatening environment that exists today, there is a constant need to assess and improve our preparedness. The Governor's Assistant for Commonwealth Preparedness has the potential and the responsibility to eliminate the "stove piping" that exists at the state level. This "stove

piping" is the direct result of turf battles developed over many years by governmental structures now proven ineffective at local, state and federal levels. The OCP should be charged with ensuring that all agencies of state government are operating with a shared sense of vision as it relates to our commonwealth's preparedness.

FUNDING

Background of Issue

Until Governor Warner's administration, funding for Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) had been provided solely by grant programs. The general fund provided zero dollars for these core public safety services. Given the uncertainty of the financial commitment from the federal government, it is essential that the Commonwealth realizes its obligation to the safety of all its citizens. Fire and EMS funding must be maintained, strengthened and expanded to support the building and maintenance of "All Hazards" local, regional and state preparedness, response and recovery capacity. Current funding levels are not adequate to ensure that Virginia's Fire and EMS providers have safe staffing, adequate training and necessary equipment and apparatus.

Goals and Positions

- Stop redirecting the growth of the Fire Programs Fund to non-fire related services. Three years ago, the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee commissioned the Department of Fire Programs to research and develop a needs analysis that would demonstrate the need for additional funds. This analysis was completed with a survey response rate of between 60 and 70 percent, and it has since been updated twice. This analysis proved that fire departments throughout Virginia lacked the most basic training and equipment.

- Support the match for the Fire Programs Fund introduced by Governor Warner in his biennium budget proposal.

- Establish the match as a permanent requirement in future budgetary processes by codifying it into the State Code.

- Stop redirecting funds from the Four-for-Life Fund for non-Emergency Medical Services.

- The Joint Legislative Audit Review Commission (JLARC) completed a study of Virginia's Emergency Medical Services in 2003. This study revealed large gaps in the localities' ability to provide essential life-saving services to the Commonwealth's citizenry.

- Continue to provide matching funds for the federal grant program, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER).

- It is a fact that not one fire department in Virginia currently meets the Safe Staffing Standard (NFPA 1710). Technology has greatly improved the equipment used by the fire service; however fire fighting continues to be one of the most labor intense professions. It is documented that safe staffing levels will improve the fire fighters' ability to save lives and property. It also reduces the number of fire fighter deaths and disability injuries. SAFER is a four year program with the federal government funding 90% the first year, 80% the second year, 50% the third year and 30% the fourth year. Localities are expected to fund 100% of the fifth year.

TRAINING

Background of Issue:

Training is an essential element in building and maintaining any public safety service. Keeping pace with changing technology and the evolving world we live in poses constant new challenges. State-required training protects the health and safety of fire fighters and emergency medical technicians while they are on the front line protecting the citizens of the Commonwealth. Since financial resources are not unlimited, it is imperative that government work in a creative and responsible manner so the best use can be made of all available resources. In Virginia, redundancy is commonplace; the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP), the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) all provide training. Some of this technical training is presented in a classroom setting while other skills training is delivered in a live environment. In order to facilitate the training for which they are responsible across the Commonwealth, each of the aforementioned agencies has separate facilities in seven different regional offices. At the same time, the Virginia Community College System (VCSS) has 23 separate institutions with multiple campuses geographically distributed throughout the same seven regions.

Recently the VDFP and OEMS have worked with the VCCS to standardize the Fire Science and Emergency Medical Services curricula across the VCCS. This curricula was standardized for dual purposes: to provide college credit and to satisfy state Fire and EMS requirements for training.

Goals and Positions

- Forge a strong permanent relationship between the VCCS, VDFP, OEMS and VDEM.

  As it relates to training and education, these agencies have missions that overlap. The Commonwealth needs to recognize this and understand that training can be provided more effectively, while reducing costs.

- Based on views expressed in Issue # 1 (Lack of a Shared Vision Across Organizations) each of these agencies (VDFP, OEMS and VDEM) needs to be consolidated under one Secretariat. Once aligned, a training department should be created for first responders.

- The VCCS would be responsible for the delivery of the academic curricula while the state training department would be utilized for hands-on skills training. This would make education and training more accessible for fire fighters and emergency medical technicians, especially in the remote rural areas of the state. While providing greater opportunities for emergency responders across the state to receive the required training, it would also allow them to receive college credit, thereby improving the Commonwealth's overall emergency management capacity.

- Virginia should avail itself of the free accredited training that meets national standards which is being delivered by public and private contractors funded through federal grant programs.

PRE AND POST CRITICAL INCIDENT FIRST RESPONDER HEALTH AND DOCUMENTATION ISSUES

Background of Issue

The Commonwealth of Virginia lacks a standardized and uniform system for documenting the baseline health of its first responders; lacks any standardized and uniform system for the reporting and inventory of occupational injuries and exposures on a shift by shift basis during critical responses; cannot yet process or facilitate documentation of mass casualties among first responders in critical response incidents; and finally, provides absolutely no follow up contact among first responders who may have been subjected to agents whose latency period may be years before illness may manifest. For example, at the Pentagon plane crash site on September 11, 2001, first responders were allowed to leave at shift changes without an inventory of possible hazardous exposures during rescue and recovery details. Some officials at the site do not have an accurate count or identity of the first responders who were there in the first 48 hours. The Pentagon at the time of the crash was still constructed with a variety of asbestos containing products. No one has yet studied the health effects of breathing those fibers in combination with the smoke and fumes associated with a burning modern jet aircraft and office complex. If it turns out to be a major cancer risk factor, how do you notify everyone who was there 10 or 15 years later? Is there a master list? How can it be studied if epidemiologists do not have access to the data they need?

Goals and Positions

- Every public safety employer should be compelled to use a standardized method for the screening of its employees to establish the baseline health of its first responders. A central master DNA data bank should be established of all first responders so that in the event of an event which results in the mass loss of first responders identities should be quickly made without having to collect toothbrushes or other personal effects of deceased first responders.

- The Commonwealth of Virginia should develop a master injury/exposure report form to document any incident where a first responder either suffers an injury or exposure to a substance or element likely to result in a future health issue. THIS SHOULD BE A SHORT EASY TO

USE FORM. Copies should be given to the employee, employer and retained in a central data bank for study and future contact should an issue later develop.

• The Commonwealth of Virginia should appoint a Health, Hardship and Safety Officer at an executive level to quickly coordinate the request for assistance of any locality whose own employed first responders are overwhelmed or incapacitated at a critical event. This officer should have the authority to gather support first responders on a stand by basis and assist in the prompt dispatch of assistance as needs develop. The key is speed and no bottlenecks. This officer should also have in place a working timeline so that as a critical incident unfolds over a period of time, he or she can rotate fatigued or ill first responders without delay or needless duplication.

• The Workers' Compensation Act must be overhauled with a process in place for speedy processing of mass injury or death of public safety employees in the event of a critical event. A detailed analysis should be made of the needs of the modern first responder and the risks they face at critical scenes.

• The Commonwealth of Virginia should consider the implementation of a second tier of emergency response other than a declaration of a state of emergency. The second tier, such as a "Critical Event" or "Major Disaster" would still empower the Commonwealth with certain emergency powers, but would be done on a more local level and would result in faster implementation. For instance, few would argue that a gasoline tanker crashing and burning on Interstate 95 in Fairfax would be a major local disaster, but does not warrant a general declaration of a state of emergency.

Issue #5

Communications: Public Safety Communications Operability & Interoperability

Background of Issue

Public Safety Operable and Interoperable Communications are essential to the successful mitigation of significant emergency events. While the Commonwealth of Virginia has been referenced as a model, it lacks some of the necessary ingredients to really effect interoperable communications throughout Virginia.

A. Research and define a minimum capability level for public safety communications (operable and interoperable).

• Enhance Interoperability coordination and promotion across and between the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) and the Statewide Agencies Radio System (STARS) COMLINK. All requests for funds to be used for communications interoperability should be directed through the SIEC to insure coordination of projects and prevent competition between them. The Kaine administration should seek statutory authority for the Commonwealth to identify a functional interoperability technology and then establish a goal to have that technology rapidly deployed with the communities identified as most at-risk from defined hazards ((i.e. natural disaster, major hazardous materials incident or terrorist incident). receiving

priority – this should all be coordinated through the SIEC to insure appropriate stakeholder involvement. The Kaine administration should provide strong leadership in identifying and advocating innovative methods for developing procuring and financing a statewide interoperability solution.

• Presently the Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator (one of the first in the nation) and its program office are funded by federal grants. The Kaine administration should seek statutory authority to create and fund the Office of Communications Interoperability and move this Office and the Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator into the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness. This will place that position closer to the Virginia preparedness strategic planning process and enhance communications across Secretariats. The Statewide Interoperability Strategic Plan is already required to be updated annually and should coincide directly with the overall Statewide Preparedness Strategic Plan which falls under the OCP purview.

• Formalize the SIEC into a fully appointed Board. The SIEC already has a governance structure and stakeholder representatives across public safety, local government, etc. To the SIEC's credit, it has already facilitated the Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator's position and program management, coordinated grant funding to localities across Virginia and facilitated the development of the first Commonwealth of Virginia Interoperability Strategic Plan.

• Support proposed building code changes to facilitate in-building radio coverage to insure public safety operability within structures (high rise and wide span buildings).

• Explore and expand role of private industry in the area of interoperable communications. Commercial wireless vendors should be involved in an advisory capacity to help leverage commercial solutions to assist in developing services like broadband and other solutions that may offer enhancements for public safety communications in the area of geographical information systems, geographic positioning systems, mobile data and create living laboratory public-private partnerships in select communities to pilot such applications. This should be a partnership effort between the SIEC and the OCP.

• Develop and implement common standards and operational protocols---While the adoption of certain technical standards is contingent upon identification of the appropriate technology, others can and should be developed and implemented now. The current interoperability planning effort has identified common radio frequencies to facilitate interoperability among state and local first responders. Common operational protocols governing day-to-day operations and major emergency situations must now be developed, trained for and implemented. Implementation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) for incident operations must also be part of these operational protocols, including the establishment of command structures and systems that allow effective internal voice and data communication between the crisis manager, strategic managers, operational managers and first responders. Agencies must be taught that the guiding purpose of effective communications in a multi-agency response across multiple jurisdictions. However, the current effort lacks the authority to require that these common standards and protocols be adopted by state and local

public safety agencies. The Kaine administration should seek statutory authority from the General Assembly to mandate the adoption of common technical standards and protocols by state and local public safety agencies.

Statewide Alerting Network: Notification to responders and citizens

Lessons from catastrophic events have identified the need to provide information quickly to first responders and citizens. Such information and instructions is invaluable at a time when chaos may occur without it.

1. Develop a Statewide Alerting Network (application) to provide information to first responders and localities that can be sent to various means of communications devices (i.e. email, wireless devices, alphanumeric pagers, cell phones, etc.) critical to effective oversight of events. This should provide the capability of two way communication between devices that are capable to allow communication to and from designated state and local government representatives.

2. Provide a Statewide Citizen Alerting Application to provide information to citizens that can be sent to various means of communications devices (i.e. email, wireless devices, alphanumeric pagers, cell phones, etc.) in order to provide instructions of what to do in time of crisis. This can also be used for such purposes of Amber Alerts, etc.

   This should also provide a mechanism that can allow local/regional messages to be originated by a locality and sent to their respective constituents ONLY as well as automatic pass through transmission of authorized messages from the state (i.e. Amber Alerts, etc.).

   This proposed system or application must be either a true statewide system or facilitate an interface with existing local notification services. The system must be easy to deploy, require minimum training and must have flexible access.

   The Virginia Fire Chiefs Association makes use of a system called the Emergency Email Wireless Network and offers to provide this service through a Virginia grant. This would simplify and expedite the procurement process and move the implementation process forward.

3. Develop a partnership with Commercial Wireless Vendors to explore methods of establishing an automatic subscription to the notification process (with an Opt Out requirement). This is done to overcome the present experience of low subscription rates as seen by many localities as a result of technology challenges and complacency.

4. Develop a statewide website that will facilitate community/regional coordination in the aftermath of an emergency or disaster. This website will allow citizens and community and faith-based organizations to find information on which needs are most pressing and how best to respond.

Statewide Situational Awareness: Implementation of WebEOC

Lessons from past catastrophic events and the potential for future events such as pandemic influenza have identified the need to provide and share information between state, local and first responder agencies for the purpose of enhanced situational awareness. Additionally, more coordination is needed among citizens and non-governmental aid organizations. Such information provides better situational awareness during an incident, better understanding of impact and ability to more effectively deploy resource assistance.

1. Develop a Statewide Strategy/Policy between the Commonwealth and localities in the access and use of WebEOC.

2. Provide training to support the implementation of WebEOC at state and local levels.

3. Continue to actively participate in the Capital Wireless Integrated Network (CapWIN) and explore opportunities where local governments/agencies may benefit from mobile data and/or applications that may otherwise be fiscally impossible.

Virginia Geographic Information Network (VGIN): Expand use to state and local public safety

It has been clearly proven that geographic information systems (GIS) can provide invaluable insight and the ability to analyze situations before, during and after natural and manmade disasters. The Virginia Geographic Information Network has made much progress in the development of statewide GIS information. Explore ways to expand the use of this GIS information to state and local public safety agencies.

1. Identify specific areas where state and local public safety may access and use the VGIN information and mapping to enhance the public safety agencies ability to better protect and serve their respective citizens.

2. Explore the availability, awareness and use of the VGIN information into Virginia's deployment of WebEOC (now in progress) and other similar projects.

3. Mapping should be available to capture critical infrastructure assets from which specific interests can be generated in a timely fashion especially when there are credible threats to a target facility. This would also be useful to support the National Infrastructure Protection Plan which is highlighted in the Virginia Strategic Plan.

NOTE: The production and availability of map products/models during catastrophic situations has proven to be an invaluable tool to predict impact areas, determine deployment strategies and assess damage to affected areas. "A picture is worth a thousand words."

Virginia Fusion Center: Expand information sharing to state and local Government and public safety

Information sharing between state and local governments and public safety agencies is key to effective prevention, response, mitigation and recovery to and from a catastrophic event. It is critical that prompt and reliable information is shared and that stovepipe limitations be identified and removed.

1. Include local representation in the development of the Virginia Statewide Fusion Center to provide input on what and how information can and should be exchanged between various levels of governments and information systems.

2. Explore and determine the best methods to build relationships of trust and credibility across all disciplines (law enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, fire departments, health departments, emergency management, etc.)

3. Explore expansion of state information sharing into the federal programs such as the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) to facilitate information distribution in a way that will be shared to neighboring states and to other participating agencies.

4. Utilize the statewide alerting network/application to provide timely information sharing through the various means of notification such as email, wireless devices, etc.

Issue Area #6

Preparedness: Education and Training

Background of Issue

The *Secure Commonwealth Initiative Strategic Plan* offers a sound approach to preparing for manmade or natural disasters. Much of this Plan has yet to be implemented, however, and – in our view -- the Commonwealth is not yet prepared to deal effectively with a severe, large scale disaster. It also is unclear whether the Commonwealth is prepared to deter or defeat terrorist attacks against "soft" targets. **The limiting factors appear to be an inadequate understanding of individual and organizational roles/responsibilities, and inadequate training.** While most "First Responders" are prepared to perform their respective roles in a crisis, the public in general is ill-prepared to adequately respond for a large-scale disaster. **If we are to avoid the social class catastrophe of Hurricane Katrina we must have diversity in our policy planning**

members, trainers and community role models to effectively reach all members of our community, especially the disadvantaged, who are frequently the most severely impacted by a disaster. We need to create a "culture of preparedness" across all levels of our society. One of the overarching goals of the Commonwealth plan is to align it with the National Response Plan, including the target capabilities, however the Commonwealth's version of the plan completely overlooks the behavioral health component of disaster preparedness. We can strive to improve upon the NRP within the Commonwealth. We propose the following actions to address the issues of training and education pre-event and post-event:

1. Specify Priority Threat Scenarios to Guide Planning & Preparation: In our opinion, the Commonwealth should focus on achieving preparedness for a limited number of priority threat scenarios, while maintaining an "all-hazards" level of readiness. Some disasters have a clear "onsite" focus- an explosion, armed attack on a soft target, hurricane, flooding or nuclear event. Other disasters have no clearly defined focus- a pandemic or biological event. Preparation to reduce damages, protect lives and property will be similar across event types. Evacuation and sheltering in place are the primary pre-event action options. Citizens, businesses, agencies and governments need to be prepared for either action option. Hurricane Katrina demonstrated that we must be prepared to be self sufficient for longer than 72 hours; 10-14 days is more realistic. We recommend that at least one scenario address a hurricane or wide-spread flooding. Another should address a contagious biological event. A third should address a major nuclear incident (whether accidental or man-made) and a fourth should deal with attacks by conventionally-armed terrorists against soft targets (shopping malls, mass transit, hotels, etc.) Collectively, these threat scenarios should serve as guides to planning and coordination among all levels of government and across all elements of society. They should also be useable as a basis for measuring preparedness.

2. Develop/Promote Locality-specific, Threat-based Multi-jurisdictional Action Plans:

The Commonwealth should work directly and closely with localities to tailor selected scenarios to the most likely and/or challenging threats they could realistically face. While a nuclear incident may not be realistic for a more rural area, preparedness for wide-spread flooding and/or a pandemic might be. Disasters may overlap- for instance hurricane season will continue to occur even while a pandemic situation is in progress. While urban areas may be higher profile targets for terrorism, rural areas may deal with an influx of people fleeing contagion, chemicals/nuclear threats or hurricanes headed for urban coastal regions. In some areas, a threat scenario focused on a severe winter and prolonged power outage might be appropriate as well. The important point, though, is that local "preparedness" can be enhanced substantially by a concerted effort on the part of the Commonwealth to focus regional attention on planning for a few, regionally relevant threat scenarios. Using an empowerment model rather than fear-based motivation to prepare may result in more participation at the citizen level. The regional all hazards behavioral health plan should be included in the approved emergency operations plan.

3. Aggressive Education Programs: Public exhortations to be "watchful" (for possible terrorism) and/or "prepared" (ala "keep a three day supply of consumables on hand at all times") don't appear to be positively affecting the actual state of public preparedness. The "color codes" adopted by DHS are similarly ineffective. Criteria establishing a minimum level of

competent preparedness, mid-level and superior level allows individuals to make choices based on their own resources and capacities for disaster preparedness. See page 4 for a sample criteria measure. We believe that education and public awareness programs need to be more narrowly focused on specific threats / scenarios and on achieving specific, tangible preparedness objectives. The public needs to understand what the local state and federal governments and relief agencies can and cannot do in a disaster response AND that, in cooperation with government agencies at all levels, the public can achieve meaningful improvement in its ability to prevent/survive and recover from a disaster. Information campaigns are only likely to be effective, if they are preceded by and build upon a comprehensive program of education. **Civil preparedness education can and should be conducted through our school system (from middle school to college), in civic organizations (churches, social organizations, etc.) and at work places. These education programs / course material, prepared in culturally relevant language, should provide 1) an understanding of the salient threats, 2) the roles and responsibilities of relevant government agencies and private organizations, and 3) the actions that individuals (and their communities) must be able to take in the event of a man-made or natural disaster.** Individuals and groups often use denial to cope with overwhelming possibilities- trying to bulldoze through denial is seldom effective, rather finding a route around the denial is more productive. Getting people to prepare for their pets, other family members, or neighbors may be easier than trying to convince them to plan for themselves. Sometimes education incorporates marketing strategies.

4. **Promote Understanding within our Least Advantaged Communities:** Achieving preparedness by our least advantaged citizens and in our least advantaged communities is a huge challenge. Many low income, elderly, immigrant and incapacitated individuals live in areas most likely to be impacted and do not have the resources to achieve a high degree of individual preparedness. We believe that extra effort must be devoted by the Commonwealth to educating and empowering this population. Local, regional and state planning personnel need to be encouraged to include community leaders from each of these groups in planning, training and providing motivational leadership for disaster preparedness, response and recovery. That said, we also believe that, in its own plans, the Commonwealth must devote additional resources to protecting the lives and well-being of this population, if a disaster were to occur. The development of scenarios and plans tailored for specific, less advantaged regions and localities would seem to us to be an appropriate first step.

5. **Training and Exercises:** It is essential that training and exercises be conducted routinely for medical, mortuary, law enforcement, fire, hazmat, and other rescue or relief organizations. It is also essential that special attention be paid to lower-probability-but-dire consequence threat scenarios, such as a nuclear or biological disaster. While a nuclear or biological disaster may not occur, training and exercises focused on these possibilities will enhance the capacity of the Commonwealth to respond to natural disasters. Citizens may self test with guidelines from the Commonwealth made available through media. They may also be encouraged to train with CERT/Citizen Corps/Red Cross/Salvation Army or other response/relief organizations- most of which are not in the public awareness. Civic groups can participate as volunteer victims in drills, providing insight and familiarity with disaster response operations. It is also essential to have a program and personnel to staff the program, that will orient and train spontaneous volunteers and

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supplementary personnel who arrive from adjacent areas to help in the mobilization phase of a disaster.

6. Information Operations: As stated above, information operations need to be complemented by in-depth planning, coordination, a broadly focused education program, and essential training and exercise programs. Once **the public gains an in-depth understanding of the Commonwealth's disaster preparedness plans and priorities, and of the roles and responsibilities of the relevant Federal, State, local, and private organizations and leaders, information operations can be an effective way to refresh and reinforce this understanding.** Individuals must understand how to obtain information prior to and after a disaster, including location of missing family members. Conversely, until a greater depth and breadth of public understanding is achieved, Commonwealth preparedness will continue to languish.

7. Regions and localities have inadequate preparations and training for mass casualty events.
- Handling of remains, temporary storage of bodies, protocols for death notification, and organization and implementation of family service centers for identification are mentioned in the Strategic Plan appendices as areas of concern.
- Misinformation is included in CERT training modules that CERT members are to provide death notification- this needs to be revised according to the protocols developed.

Goals of the Governor-Elect for the Office of Preparedness

Priorities With A Fiscal Impact
- Development of Regionally- and Locality-Specific Multi-jurisdictional Threat Scenarios and Preparedness Action Plans with Defined Individual and Organizational Training Competencies and Inclusion of Behavioral Health Components
- Develop Scenario-driven Course Materials that Promote an In-depth Understanding of Organizational Roles and Responsibilities
- Implementing a Comprehensive, Commonwealth Preparedness Education Program that includes Diverse Populations and Cultures based on Empowerment and a "Culture of Preparedness"
- Sustaining an Effective Training, Credentialing and Exercise Program for First Responders and other Key Personnel, including Behavioral Health Disaster Support Providers
- Develop and Implement Training and Orientation for Spontaneous Volunteers and Supplementary Personnel from adjacent areas during Mobilization phase of the Disaster Operation
- Develop protocols for mass casualty with clearly defined jurisdictions and additional Medical Examiner office capacity

Priorities With Little or No Fiscal Impact
- Determining and Prioritizing Threat Scenarios as a Guide to Planning and Basis for Achieving Greater Understanding.
- Determining, Documenting and Training for Individual and Organizational Roles and Responsibilities thus Eliminating Uncertainties

- Determining, Documenting and Training Individual Roles and Responsibilities/ Authority, and Eliminating Uncertainties
- Inclusion of diverse population community members in planning, training and motivational leadership to enhance participation and investment in preparedness and response activities
- Incorporate existing organizations that tend to respond to disasters into planning and training development- faith based groups, advocacy groups for disabled, civic organizations, etc.

Sample Criteria for Preparedness Levels (Individual and Organizational)

Basic/Minimum: 1) evacuation and shelter in place plans are defined
2) supplies (food, water, medicine, blankets) for individuals for 72 hours are available and stored 3) alternative heat source is identified 4) transport for evacuation is identified and available

Mid-level: in addition to the above 4) communication (battery radio, outside contact, local bulletin board) is identified and available 5) alternative power source is available 6) continuity of operations plan and finances for 30 days identified and available

Superior/Advanced: In addition to all of the above being available for 2 weeks of evacuation or sheltering in place 7) a plan for recovery is in place

8) individual/organization is familiar with local, regional, state and federal response plans 9) enough resources are available to assist an additional 10-20% (ie families of first responders, families of staff, neighbors/kin, community members) 10) familiarity with NIMS/ICS

Addendum- Training and Education:

The Behavioral Health components of disaster response are absent within the strategic plan.

Background of Issue

Emergency rooms in Tokyo were deluged with thousands of worried well residents after the sarin gas attack- 75% had been nowhere near the subway scene. The divorce rate of first responders involved in the Oklahoma City bombing is up 300%. Two police officers committed suicide within the first weeks of Hurricane Katrina and dozens of others abandoned their posts due to lack of personal preparation before the hurricane struck. Hotline calls to Gulf area suicide hotlines continue to be 70% higher than prior to the hurricane.

Nine of the thirty-six NRP targeted capability descriptions include behavioral health services/personnel as part of the described capability building: Community Recovery, Emergency Public Education, Emergency Public Information, Isolation and Quarantine, Mass Care, Medical Supplies and Distribution, Medical Surge, Pre-hospital triage and treatment, and Worker Health and Safety. Another seven target capabilities need to include behavioral health training for the responders or inclusion of disaster support teams to handle panicked or recalcitrant individuals who can impede an operation: Emergency Evacuation, Fatality Management, Mass Prophylaxis and Vaccinations, Public Health Epidemiological Investigation and Laboratory; Public Health Safety and Security Response; Restoration of Lifelines; and Volunteer Management and Donations which mentions following relief workers for behavioral and medical consequences from the disaster operations.

Emergency response officials are unaware or unclear about how to utilize behavioral health response workers in early phases of an event, seldom include them in drills and often resort to calling them when poor risk communication or inadequate crowd control lead to crisis

situations for workers. Mental health professionals are not trained/skilled in disaster mental health response, however community mental health centers are designated as the lead mental disaster mental health agency in state and federally declared situations. Critical incident debriefing is a necessary component of regional disaster mental health planning however it is not sufficient. ***There is currently no state or national competence criteria/standardized training for clinical and peer disaster support personnel.*** Psychological issues affect everyone involved in a disaster situations, from the emergency worker who gets claustrophobic in a PPE suit, the police officer whose own family is unprepared for a disaster, the administrator who allows personnel to work exceedingly long hours without breaks onsite at an explosion, the public information officer who tells people what not to do, Medical Examiner staff who work with families for body identification, the National Guard soldier who has to handle persons in dire need at a service center, the volunteers who staff shelters and feeding sites and the adults and children directly or indirectly impacted by the devastation of a mass casualty event.

Recommendations:
1. Provide standardized training in disaster behavioral health developed/reviewed and approved by the Terrorism and Disaster Preparedness Behavioral Health Advisory Council (TADBHAC) for:
- Emergency and administrative officials
- First responders, medical examiners, public health staff, hospital staff
- Mental health agencies, centers, professional groups
- Individual providers, both clinical and peer, who may serve as volunteer support providers
- Faith based groups that tend to respond to disasters with sheltering, feeding, debris removal and recovery tasks
- Relief agencies affiliated with disaster response work
- Event personnel such as state fair workers/volunteers
- Train school personnel in addressing disaster behavioral health components with students and parents as well as staff.

2. Incorporate Behavioral Health into the Commonwealth's strategic plan in a clear and defined manner:
- Expanding on the incorporation of behavioral health within the National Response Plan target capabilities section per the recommendations of the Governor's TADBHAC members
- Requiring that local emergency operations plans include an all hazards regional disaster mental health plan approved by DMRMRSAS disaster planning director and submitted by community service boards.
- Merging the pandemic plans of the VDH with local emergency operations plans and including the behavioral health components (workforce support, public education, crowd management at inoculation sites, etc)

Issue Area #7

Capitol Region

There Needs to be Integration of State Preparedness Structures

Background of Issue

The current structure for Commonwealth preparedness is not integrated across either departments or functions. This means it is sometimes impossible to know who is in charge or who to go to for information or support. It is a tremendous barrier to both preparing for, and responding to, an event.

This is an issue that affects all regions, but is acutely felt in the Capitol Region, because of the added coordination needed with Maryland and DC as well as the Federal Government (including the military). Preparedness involves many different agencies and departments (health, transportation, public safety). Currently there is no good coordination between and among these departments in Virginia making coordination with Maryland, DC and the Federal Government that much more difficult. Making coordination within Virginia even harder, Virginia's state regions differ by department/agency, i.e. health has different regions from transportation and both differ from the state police regions.

1. Put One Office In Charge

The Office of Commonwealth Preparedness (OCP) should be over all other agencies for preparedness and have line authority to provide direction. This one entity needs to set preparedness policy and ensure that it is carried out by all the different departments involved. OCP should ensure that there is a state-wide capacity to respond to emergencies.

2. Establish a Regional Approach

There needs to be a regional approach to preparedness with all involved departments and agencies having the same regions, i.e. police, transportation, health, education should all have the same regions. Each region should be organized with a governance structure to accomplish the following:

- represent all response disciplines, citizens, business and NGO's
- assess local/regional risks
- develop response plans appropriate to the risks faced in that region
- ensure an integration of those plans with other the other regions

3. Establish a Standards Based Approach

Common understandings/definitions for preparedness (best practices) need to be set by OCP. While each region is likely to have somewhat different risks and threats, there

should be a minimum floor of preparedness for every region set by the State and supported by the State with resources. Equipment baselines should be established to ensure regions can meet expected risks. OCP must ensure that equipment bought by localities is appropriate and interoperable with other regions, so that each region is prepared to handle its own emergencies and can quickly and easily give aid to, or receive aid from, another region.

Relationships with Federal Departments (including the Military) and Agencies Must Be Clear

Local jurisdictions are often not included in discussions between Virginia and the Federal Government, yet, in an emergency, local jurisdictions will be on the front lines and expected to coordinate/direct relief and rescue efforts.

While this is an issue for every region in the state, it is particularly important for the Capitol Region because there are so many federal facilities and landmarks in our region. In an emergency, local jurisdictions will need to coordinate/direct relief and rescue efforts. If they've not been included in decisions about preparedness (and perhaps not informed about them), it will be very difficult for them to implement those decisions.

1. Local Jurisdictions Must be Included in Decision-making between State and Federal Authorities.

State agencies often communicate with federal agencies (including the military) about local issues – but local jurisdictions are completely left out of the communication network. Local jurisdictions should be included in, or, at the very least, be notified of communications between state and federal agencies.

2. The State Needs to Support Localities so the can Efficiently Interact with Federal Authorities.

The Commonwealth should ensure that a state approved training program for NIMS (National Incident Management System) be instituted and that responders of all disciplines be required to complete training; a similar approach should be developed for the National Response Plan.

A structure should be in place for high level state officials to be on site, or very close, to provide active support and coordination among local, state and federal authorities during an emergency.

Communication at All Levels Must be Clear and Timely

Communication at and among all levels, local, state and national is poor. It is not always clear who speaks for the state and who makes decisions. In an emergency, it would not be clear who is in charge of what, but also who provides what information to whom and when. In an emergency, good and timely information is crucial.....for everyone.

1. Lines of Communication and Authority Need to be Made Clear – with preparedness exercises to test communication systems and relationships at the state, local and federal levels and with authorities, the general public and the private sector – business and non-profits.

2. Who will Inform Whom and When Must be Clear at all Levels for Preparedness. As in 1 under Issue Area #2 above, there must be good coordination between state and local agencies in preparedness planning. There must also be good communication to citizens and businesses about what plans are in place. As far as the individual citizen is concerned, if they do not know what the plan is.........for them there is no plan. Citizens need to know ahead of time how they will learn of an event, how they will be told what steps they need to take to protect themselves and allow responders to address the most urgent needs.

3. Who will Inform Whom and When must be clear at all levels for response. Not only must communication be clear and timely between state, local and federal officials and responders during an event, but it must be so with the public. For the public to react as desired to protect themselves and allow responders to help those most in need, the public needs good and timely information from sources the public knows and trusts.

Public Preparedness/Building Resilient Communities

The public and private sector is often absent from preparedness planning, or not effectively present. The public does not know how they will be alerted if there is an emergency, nor do they know where to go for good information during an emergency. The public and much of the private sector also is not clear about what might be expected of them in an emergency and what they need to do to be prepared. Evacuation of a portion of Northern Virginia may very well be necessary some day. Much more planning and public education needs to happen at all levels before we could rapidly evacuate a part of our area in an emergency. Any efforts should include strengthening and maximizing existing community preparedness groups like the Citizen Corps Council (CCC) and Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT).

1. Simple public alert and communication systems must be set up and then communicated to the public and private sector. These systems need some built in redundancy and need to function when the electricity is out.

2. Instructions about what to be prepared for and how to prepare need to be developed and then communicated to the public and private sector. Currently the public gets preparation suggestions from all sorts of sources. These suggestions range from "have a 3 day supply of food and water available at home" (relatively simple) to instructions to be prepared to evacuate with extra prescription medicines, pet food, a gallon of water per day for every person, blankets, shovels, heat sources etc. etc. (very complex and, in most situations – unless you're used to packing for a 2 week camping trip, completely impractical).

3. An extensive and ongoing public education campaign needs to be undertaken once #1 and #2 above are developed. The CCC and other community organizations should be used to both develop and undertake the campaign. Care needs to be taken to ensure that representatives of the general public provide feedback to see that instructions are useful, simple and clear and will be received as we want them to be. Public schools also should be part of the effort.

4. Evacuation in Northern Virginia will require special planning, preparation, communication, and public education. In an event requiring an area in Northern Virginia to evacuate rapidly, it would need to be clear who should evacuate, to where, and what routes those evacuating should use. Coordination with various local authorities will need to be detailed and thorough before an event, to eliminate confusion so that all involved can implement their portion of the evacuation plan quickly. It also would need to be clear to the public and authorities who should NOT evacuate and should stay where they are in order to keep routes clear for those who need them. This will require not only good communication with the general public at the time of an emergency, but a high level of trust and preparation of the public before an emergency. Individuals told to stay in place must know what that means for them and they must trust that will be safe staying in place AND that children in other areas told to stay in place, or to evacuate, will be properly cared for and safe. COG has done a lot of work on this area ......but we are not ready yet.

5. Standards for what makes a resilient community need to be developed and then the CCC, CERT, Neighborhood Watch organizations, as well as other existing civic organizations, need to be part of an overall effort to build resilient communities that can care for themselves during a crisis when first responders are busy addressing urgent needs.

Issue #8

Hampton Roads

Interagency training on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) methodologies and practices.

Background: The President signed HSPD-5 *Management of Domestic Incidents*, in February 2003 mandating that state, local, tribal government and Federal agencies implement, practice and become proficient in the Incident Management System. This system, when fully implemented, will provide a consistent nationwide approach for governments and agencies to work together effectively and efficiently in response to domestic incidents regardless of cause, size or complexity. The Coast Guard trains extensively in the use of the NIMS ICS management tool for incident response. To maximize proficiency in Incident Command/Unified Command, all response agencies must be able to speak the same language and understand the philosophy.

Recommendations: Seek new avenues for NIMS ICS training among local, Commonwealth and Federal first responders. Seek ways to improve existing interagency and

intergovernmental ICS training with a focus on operating at a Unified Command level. Explore the potential for developing an interagency / intergovernmental NIMS Training Team in the Commonwealth to ensure all ICS training efforts are coordinated.

Interagency maritime security exercise development and planning.

Background: In August 2004 exercise Determined Promise-04 (DP-04) simulated a terrorist attack involving release of an unknown airborne substance on a cruise ship in the port. There were multiple follow-on terrorist style attacks initiated simultaneously in the Hampton Roads area and throughout the Commonwealth. The maritime component of this exercise illustrated the need for improved exercise planning between Commonwealth and Coast Guard exercise planners to ensure maximum participation and coordination among the many jurisdictions that would be involved in an incident of this magnitude.

Recommendations: Seek avenues to enhance the planning and coordination of exercises that could potentially involve first responders from among Commonwealth, local and Federal agencies.

Exploration and availability of security grants for improving interoperability and physical security in the maritime environment.

Background: Numerous grant processes exist that can be used to enhance physical security arrangements and law enforcement agency interoperability in the maritime domain. Attention has historically been focused on the "Port Security Grant" process with less emphasis on the other grant processes available.

Recommendations: The Virginia Area Maritime Security Committee is in the process of establishing a working group to address this issue and looks forward to the Commonwealth's continued support in ensuring that all of these potential security enhancement funding sources are understood and utilized.

Improved interagency communications.

Background: Interoperability of communications systems is problematic in multi-agency operations. Basic frequency and compatibility issues with radios and other communications equipment reduce effectiveness during multi-agency operations. This issue is magnified when conducting operations that cover several jurisdictions as can be found in the Hampton Roads maritime environment. In a worse case scenario lack of the most effective communications between responding agencies could result in a blue on blue confrontation on the water with potentially life-threatening results.

Recommendations: Seek funding, hardware and technological solutions to fully integrate / improve interagency communications systems.

Interagency maritime security planning.

Background: Federal requirements to update / modify contingency and response plans since 9/11 have been significant. The alignment of these plans with Commonwealth and local plans may not have received the focus that it should have due to the abbreviated process used to modify these plans.

Recommendations: Include Coast Guard planners in the Commonwealth planning process, when appropriate, to ensure alignment of Federal and Commonwealth contingency and response plans.

Interagency maritime law enforcement Memorandum's of Understanding (MOU).

Background: Maritime law enforcement MOUs between the Coast Guard and the Virginia Marine Police as well as the Coast Guard and the Virginia Beach Marine Police have been signed within the last year. These MOUs are force multipliers with respect to maritime security and maritime domain awareness.

Recommendation: Continue support of the development of these MOUs between the Coast Guard and other local law enforcement jurisdictions.

Intra-jurisdictional Chain of Command

Background: One of the major impediments to operations in the Commonwealth is the absolute autonomy of local jurisdictions and the seeming lack of direct linkage to, or authority of, the state to direct or more importantly orchestrate the actions of local resources in response **extreme** situations natural or man made.

Recommendation: Seek to enact legislation that strengthens the authority and expertise base of Regional and State level EOC Directors for those **large scale situations/incidents** which cross jurisdictional lines for Disaster Response, Law Enforcement and Public Safety in General. Or in other words create in law a clearly defined chain of command from the Governor's office right down to/through each Mayor's office to avoid a mess like the one that followed hurricane Katrina.

Evacuation Plan for Coastal Region During a Natural Disaster

Background of Issue

As we have all seen during the 2005 Hurricane Season, the Gulf Coast Region seemed ill prepared to deal with a Category 4/5 hurricanes causing major loss of life. The Hampton Roads Region would be especially susceptible to coastal flooding, wind damage and possible total destruction in the event of a major storm.

B. **Early Notification of the Public**

- **Pre-Planned Evacuation Routes**:
Review and revise the region Emergency Preparedness Plan using lessons learned from the 2005 Hurricane Season. Provide

- **Establish/Revise Timelines to Begin Moving the Masses:**
Prior to landfall of a major hurricane, sufficient time is required to move those persons from vulnerable areas to a secure shelter. Timelines must be established and adhered to prevent last minute movement of people.

- **Secure Public/Private Transportation:**
Provide both public, as well as private transportation, for those without transportation early on to a secure shelter.

First Responder / Citizen Involvement

Background of Issue

As addressed in the Secure Commonwealth Initiative Strategic Plan, First Responder / Citizen involvement is crucial during any Pre or Post Natural Disaster or Terrorist Attack/WMD Event.

1. Expand the Role of the First Responder / Citizen:

Military Involvement

Background of Issue

The Hampton Roads Region is rich with military personnel with specialty backgrounds to aid in the event of a Natural Disaster or Terrorist Attack/WMD Event, both pre and post event.   Even thought the state will provide state military resources, early callout for assistance from Federal Military personnel should be in place.

1. **Establish Coordination between the State and Local Federal Military Agencies:**

   Pre Natural Disaster or Terrorist Attack/WMD coordination between the state and Hampton Roads Federal military agencies needs to be established with guidelines for post event coordination.

2. **Plan for the Families of the Hampton Roads Military:**

   Military personnel will be required to secure their own bases and facilities with little time to provide for their families in the event of a natural disaster often leaving them to fend for themselves.